

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 PM-04 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00

INRE-00 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 OMB-01 PRS-01 /056 W

-----151425Z 048523 /43

O P 151335Z FEB 77

FM AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

TO CINCPACFLT MAKALAPA HI IMMEDIATE

CTG SEVEN TWO PT THREE IMMEDIATE

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6110

SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY

JCS WASHDC PRIORITY

CNO WASHDC PRIORITY

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI PRIORITY

COMSEVENTHFLT PRIORITY

CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON PRIORITY

COMIDEASTFOR PRIORITY

COMNAVAIRPAC PRIORITY

CINCPACREP INDIAN OCEAN PRIORITY

CTF SEVEN TWO PRIORITY

CTF SEVEN SEVEN PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY VICTORIA PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L NAIROBI 2014

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI KE US

SUBJECT: P-3 FLIGHTS TO KENYA

REF: (A) CINCPACFLT 120334Z FEB 77 (NOTAL),

(B) CTG SEVEN TWO PT THREE 130125Z FEB 77 (NOTAL)

1. REF A PROPOSED THAT INITIAL P-3 FLIGHT INTO MOMBASA
BE SCHEDULED FOR 23 FEB 77 TO COINCIDE WITH OUTBOUND
TRANSIT ENTERPRISE TASK GROUP. REF B IS REQUEST FOR
DIPLOMATIC CLEARANCE.

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2. AFTER CAREFUL CONSIDERATION, EMBASSY BELIEVES INITIAL
P-3 FLIGHT SHOULD NOT TAKE PLACE AT THIS TIME, FOR
FOLLOWING REASONS:

A. P-3 FLIGHTS TO NAIROBI WERE AN IMPORTANT ELEMENT OF VISIBLE
U.S. MILITARY MOVES IN INDIAN OCEAN AREA LAST SUMMER FOLL-

OWING ENTEBBE RAID. FLIGHTS ARE THUS SUSCEPTIBLE TO INTERPRETATION AS POLITICAL GESTURE, AND COULD AROUSE UNWARRANTED SPECULATION ABOUT PURPOSE OF ENTERPRISE VISIT. TENSIONS BETWEEN KENYA AND TANZANIA HAVE BEEN HIGH IN PAST TWO WEEKS SINCE TANZANIA CLOSED BORDER WITH KENYA, AND ANY ASPECT OF CARRIER VISIT WHICH APPEARED NON-ROUTINE MIGHT EXACERBATE SITUATION. CARRIER VISIT ITSELF MAY DRAW CRITICISM, BUT SHOULD NOT BE TOO CONTROVERSIAL SINCE ENTERPRISE VISITED MOMBASA TWO YEARS AGO.

B. AMBASSADOR MARSHALL PLANS TO DISCUSS P-3 FLIGHTS WITH GOVERNMENT OF SEYCHELLES DURING VISIT TO VICTORIA IN LAST WEEK OF FEBRUARY. ANY UNDESIRABLE PRESS TREATMENT OF P-3 FLIGHT TO KENYA WOULD REDUCE CHANCES OF FAVORABLE RESPONSE BY SEYCHELLES.

C. WHILE KENYA GOVERNMENT IN GRANTING APPROVAL IN PRINCIPLE IMPLICITLY RECOGNIZED POSSIBILITY THAT P-3 FLIGHTS COULD DRAW CRITICISM FROM OTHER COUNTRIES IN REGION, WE THINK THAT LINKING FIRST FLIGHT WITH CARRIER VISIT WOULD NEEDLESSLY GIVE FLIGHTS HIGH PROFILE AND FUTURE ACCESS TO KENYA COULD BE JEOPARDIZEDV.

3. REGRET FLIGHT CANNOT BE APPROVED AT THIS TIME, SINCE ATTRACTIVENESS FOR OPERATIONAL REASONS IS OBVIOUS. WE WILL BE PREPARED TO SCHEDULE FIRST P-3 FLIGHT AT YOUR CONVENIENCE WHEN DUST HAS SETTLED FROM ENTERPRISE VISIT, ABOUT 10 MARCH OR THEREAFTER.

MARSHALL
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NNN

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